

visits to Kansas and our many discussions here in our Nation's Capital.

In 2019, Secretary McCarthy joined me in Kansas to visit Seitz Elementary School, which serves the families of the Big Red One soldiers on Fort Riley. Secretary McCarthy was instrumental in helping to find funding for this school in 2011 when he was the Special Assistant to Defense Secretary Robert Gates, a Kansan. I was pleased he joined me in Kansas to visit the school—and its students—that he helped create in 2019. We also met with Fort Riley leadership and then traveled to Wichita to visit defense manufacturing and academic leaders to discuss the future of Army procurement.

These personal touch points with soldiers and with the Army community were some of the reasons why Secretary McCarthy was universally respected within the Army family.

While I will always appreciate our personal engagements with soldiers, I will also remember our efforts to support soldiers and veterans when they step off the battlefield or separate from military service.

This past Veterans Day, we coauthored an editorial that discussed our parallel efforts to support the mental health and well-being of soldiers and veterans. Reports show Americans across the country are feeling isolated and alone in today's socially distanced environment, including our Nation's service men and women and veteran populations. Between my efforts as chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee to implement the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act and Secretary McCarthy's effort to build interpersonal connections between soldiers, we are working to give soldiers and veterans the tools they need to overcome mental health challenges they face.

As Secretary McCarthy transitions out of the watchful eye of public life, I rise this evening to express my appreciation for his leadership, his character, and his moral compass. He never let politics or convenience influence his decisions, and that has significantly benefited soldiers, Army civilians, veterans, and Kansans across the Nation.

As the chairman and now ranking member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I will always strive to help veterans find success after service.

Secretary McCarthy, I have no doubts that you will find success and happiness after your dedicated service to our country. I thank your family for their support of your public service. I know that you and your family will find a quality life with purpose and meaning as you enter the next phase.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to complete my remarks before the scheduled rollcall vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO CHRIS GILLOTT

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I rise today to recognize and thank three long-serving aides who have served my office but more importantly served our Nation proudly, and they are now moving on to the next chapters of their lives.

First, Chris Gillott. Chris Gillott was my legislative director and for 8 years has been my right-hand person on policy. He never failed to take the ideas we discussed together and craft the actual policy needed to make a meaningful difference in the lives of folks in Louisiana and the lives of all Americans.

He was a master at navigating the partisan divide to find areas of consensus upon which we could build to advance real solutions. I was always struck that he was on a first-name basis with the legislative director of—and fill in the Democratic Senator's or the Republican Senator's name. You have a sense that in the era before Zoom calls, they would go out and have a beer on a regular basis, and that helped us tremendously.

We saw this fully on display recently as Chris was a central figure in the so-called 908 Coalition, which jump-started stalled COVID relief packages. And it wasn't just the relationships between the Senators but, again, as I said, between the different legislative directors from both parties in all offices.

His efforts were also central to passing legislation to ban surprise medical billing—a more than 2-year effort that will have a direct and positive impact on the pocketbooks of American families. He was crucial in our effort to make healthcare more affordable and pass generational tax reform. For every major legislative pursuit, I could rely upon Chris.

What many in Louisiana may not know is that he has also been a central figure engaged in some of the most pressing issues affecting our State, including offshore energy production, revenue sharing, energy regulation and permitting, the National Flood Insurance Program, and public works related to flood protection. These are all important to the well-being of our State and the folks who live there, as well as our entire country, and all these were regularly under assault.

Chris was a fearless advocate for energy production and for the jobs that energy production creates to not only help meet America's energy needs but to meet the individual families' financial needs. He has been on the frontlines to prevent changes to revenue sharing that would gut the money used in my State for hurricane protection, flood mitigation, and coastal environmental renewal. He has defended the National Flood Insurance Program to ensure that this critical lifeline remains accessible to people across the country and, importantly, to those in Louisiana.

Thank you, Chris, for all you have done for me and for those of Louisiana.

TRIBUTE TO ALLISON KAPSNER SOLLEY

Madam President, the next person I will speak of is Allison Kapsner Solley. Allison is a Minnesotan. She said she grew up on the upper end of the Mississippi, but she found a home in the lower end of the Mississippi—or at least the office that represented Louisiana. She joined my staff at the beginning of my first Senate term as a scheduler but through sheer excellence became deputy chief of staff and a close confidant.

Trust is so important. I learned I could always trust Allie's judgment and her ability to accomplish anything. She is irreplaceable. She has had an impact on this office, ensuring that we better serve Louisiana, but that impact has meant that we will better serve Louisiana even after her departure.

Some examples. For any office to succeed, it needs to run efficiently and effectively. I knew this, that we had to have systems. Allie figured out the systems. She implemented them across all the offices here in DC and Louisiana. She kept things running smoothly. And she has a skill of identifying an individual's strengths and helping that individual leverage those strengths into results that contributed to the whole but also to the future of the individual.

I am about to say this about Allie, but I could say it of Chris and also of David, whom I am about to speak of. In Mark chapter 10, versus 42 through 45, Jesus speaks about servant leadership, and in there is a quote that “the greatest among you shall be your servants.” Allie is someone who has served others and helped others serve as well. Whether it be our staff, our mission, our constituents, the State of Louisiana, or the United States of America, she served creatively and tirelessly. She will be greatly missed, but I am looking forward to all that she achieves as she enters the next phase of her career.

TRIBUTE TO DAVID MILLS

Madam President, now let me speak of David Mills, a Louisiana native and a man of tremendous character and deep faith who has served for 5 years on my staff. He came to Washington because he felt called to give back to his State and Nation through public service. He was working in Congress for the right reasons, and his work reflected that.

David handled pro-life issues and other legal issues for my office. He was key in last year's impeachment trial as an attorney providing quick, reliable research to supplement my understanding of the testimony that we heard.

David also has the ability just to note something others don't notice and then very gently suggest some modification of how I would handle a situation, and that modification, although nuanced, could be so important, and I really learned to trust those insights.

David also handled privacy issues and has laid the foundation for work that